

PASS FOLL TO CONTROL CENTER

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*UPI**"013A*

PLANE 6/5 NX

NAHA, OKINAWA (UPI)--A U.S. AIR FORCE SR71, FASTEST PLANE IN THE WORLD, IS MISSING AND PRESUMED CRASHED IN THE PACIFIC, AMERICAN MILITARY SPOKESMEN SAID TODAY.

THE TEST VERSION OF THE HIGH LEVEL RECONNAISSANCE JET--SUCCESSOR TO THE U2 SPY PLANE USED OVER THE SOVIET UNION--WAS REPORTED OVERDUE TUESDAY DURING A "ROUTINE TRAINING FLIGHT" FROM THE LOCAL AIR FORCE BASE.

THE SINGLE PILOT ABOARD THE LONG, BLACK NEEDLE-NOSED CRAFT SENT A LAST MESSAGE FROM A SPOT ABOUT 600 MILES SOUTH OF HERE AND 500 MILES EAST OF MANILA, THE SPOKESMEN SAID.

AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICIALS HAVE LAUNCHED A SEARCH OPERATION.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON UNVEILED THE FIRST SR71 FEB. 29, 1964. THE PLANE IS SAID TO FLY NEARLY 100,000 FEET HIGH--ABOUT 20 MILES.

IT IS SAID TO HAVE REACHED 2,300 MILES AN HOUR, THE FASTEST PLANE RECORD.

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NAHA, OKINAWA AP - A HIGH-ALTITUDE U.S. RECONNAISSANCE PLANE AND ITS PILOT HAVE BEEN MISSING IN THE PACIFIC AREA SINCE TUESDAY WHILE ON A "ROUTINE TRAINING FLIGHT," THE U.S. AIR FORCE REPORTED.

THE AIR FORCE SAID AN AIR AND SEA SEARCH WAS LAUNCHED FOR THE YF12A SR71- A SPY PLANE DESCRIBED AS MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN THE U2.

THE AIR FORCE SAID THE SEARCH WAS CONCENTRATED IN THE PACIFIC ABOUT 600 MILES SOUTH OF OKINAWA AND 500 MILES EAST OF MANILA. THE PLANE WAS BASED ON OKINAWA.

NORTH VIETNAM CLAIMED THAT ITS ANTIAIRCRAFT GUNS SHOT DOWN AN AMERICAN RECONNAISSANCE PLANE SOUTH OF HANOI TUESDAY BUT DESCRIBED IT AS A "U.S. PILOTLESS SPY PLANE." THE SEARCH AREA FOR THE OTHER PLANE IS MORE THAN 1,000 MILES EAST OF VIETNAM.

THE AIR FORCE SAID THE LAST CONTACT WITH THE PLANE WAS AT 1:42 A.M. EDT TUESDAY. THE AIR FORCE DID NOT SAY IF THE MESSAGE INDICATED TROUBLE.

JAPAN'S KYODO NEWS SERVICE, IN A DISPATCH FROM OKINAWA, SAID THE YF12A SR71 WAS ONE OF TWO SUCH RECONNAISSANCE PLANES BASED ON OKINAWA.

BJ240AED JUNE 5"

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW